778 shall merely point out that part of this equipment, permanently assigned
789 to magical use, is étyi, taboo to the uninitiated and sometimes even to other mingengañ than the owner, that certain objects become bityi after having once been used for this purpose, while others are returned to ordinary use, and others are destroyed after use.

f. Prohibitions

784 Prohibitions, bityi, assume a large place in Pahouin life. Martrou (no. 159) has devoted a special study to them, which is very well documented but still incomplete, because of their number and diversity.

The word étyi comes from the root TYI/KI, conveying an idea of strength (cf. above, p. 133), of authority, and also of cutting, hence of prohibition; /for example, / tyik = to cut, kill, slice, decide; tyili = to render taboo; tyii = to have a taboo (étyi is the nominal-resulting form of the last verb); tyilan = to be taboo. /122/

A complete listing of the bityi is probably impossible, but a brief classification may be attempted by distinguishing /the following/:

Food prohibitions and prohibitions of actions.

Among prohibitions of actions there are those protecting certain animals, marriage prohibitions, and general sexual prohibitions.

Individual prohibitions and collective prohibitions.

Hereditary prohibitions and personal prohibitions.

Temporary and permanent prohibitions.

Masculine, feminine, and age-grade prohibitions.

Ordinary prohibitions (zesé bityi) and capital prohibitions, bityi awu (mortal ones).

All together they form a sort of network that covers every act,
[747] every phase of individual and social conduct. Mission activity and general development have caused some to disappear or have lessened the immediate consequences of infractions, minsem, but enough remain with sufficient sanction to influence the whole of day-to-day life.

● [688] A nsem, a breaking of a prohibition, has various consequences, ranging from a slight illness to death, and almost always carrying with it public reprobation. The nsem may be unconscious, the culprit being unaware that his act was taboo for him, either because he had not been taught so or because the étyi had been imposed without his knowledge by a magician.

757 575 that of his nagual and vice versa. If he is ill or if he dies, his nagual suffers or dies; if the nagual dies or suffers, so the man dies or suffers.

[Pp. 474-480 omitted. --Translator] [481]

Initiation of the Practitioner

575 791 The practitioner at the time of his initiation undergoes a different kind of test from that which young [ordinarily] men do. These tests are distinguished by a more marked degree of cruelty and especially by the offering of a victim. The victim will first be dedicated in special rites. After the tests and when the neophyte has been judged fit to enter the priestly company, then only is the totem chosen. But the choice is not left to the candidate; the "admitting" practitioner gives it to him. He must first of all undergo a severe fast of at least seven days. During this time he is forbidden absolutely, under any pretext, to leave his hut, which is set apart in a portion of the forest reserved to practitioners and called éli béngan. No person is allowed to approach. Any intercourse with women, even a mere glance, [362 ●688] would bring about permanent exclusion. Moreover, the woman would be put to death, and her father or husband would have no right to compensation, pecuniary or other.

During the neophyte's seclusion his "admitting" [practitioner] has chosen the totem; avoiding many complications, he almost always chooses the class totem to which the confraternity is already dedicated.

What kind of totems are they? They never belong to the mineral realm, nor are they ever celestial phenomena, nor spirits of any sort, materialized or not, as happens with clan or tribal totems.

575 791 825 The class totem is usually a bird [or] a swiftly moving animal, rarely a fierce one when the choice would be made because of the animal's positive qualities and not for its power to harm. Indeed the secret society prefers to seek as protecting totems, those that will guarantee swift and sure retreat in case

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The ceremony is altogether secret in the sense that no layman may be present, but it remains a legal ceremony, and [484] everyone in the village -- if only through having had to stay away -- knows where and when it takes place. However, it must not be mentioned by anyone. Anyone doing so would have to pay a fine, usually of a fowl or its equivalent in value.

Thus the totem initiation of practitioner belongs to the ordinary scheme of things.

That of the sorcerer is quite different.

Initiation of the Sorcerer; the Nagual

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In a book (1) published several years ago, the author, Mgr.

> 1. Sous le Ciel d'Afrique, Recits d'un Missionaire [Under the African Sky, A Missionary's Account], by the Rev. Father Bulêon, Congregation of the Holy Ghost, pp. 88 ff.

Bulêon ... gives an eyewitness account of the sorcerer's initiation. ...

[Footnote omitted. --Translator]

"To be initiated as a sorcerer means being initiated by secret ceremonies into certain rites through which one may gain some signal favor from a spirit whose power one recognizes. ...

"Motivated by revenge, avarice, or ambition, an African one day leaves his village, to which he only expects to return when armed with the mysterious and terrible power that will allow him to satisfy his desires. His journey's end may be distant; often he has excellent reasons for seeking, far away and usually outside his tribe, someone who will confer marvelous privileges upon him. His absence sometimes lasts [485] several months. ...

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

"The candidate is seated on the ground, wearing only a loincloth and tattooed more than the others. Undermined by severe privations made more hazardous by being uninterrupted,

1. Birth and Name Giving

844 Only women, the village matrons, are allowed to help a mother in childbirth. Men are absolutely excluded, even husbands. A woman who gives birth on a journey prefers to go off by herself into the forest rather than ask for her husband's help.

As soon as the child is delivered, his umbilical cord is cut and he is carefully washed. The remnants of the cord are wrapped in a cloth and buried out of the way. In the case of a chief's son, especially that of the head chief, the remains are buried, as we have seen, at the foot of a sacred fig tree. (1)

[824 778]

1. Ficus elastica.

Great importance is given to the tree's growth, and to touch it is strictly forbidden. Any violation of the tree would be considered an attack upon the human being.

[689]

851 A few days after birth, the baby is carried to his father, 847 who may accept it or refuse it. However, the latter [571] happens only if the child is deformed or crippled, in which case it is ruthlessly sacrificed. The religious rites (1) connected 553

1. See Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie [Bulletin of the Neuchâtel Geographical Society], 1910, "Les rites de la naissance chez les Fân" [Birth Rites among the Fang], by Father Trilles.

with birth are numerous, but the only ones that seem to me to be totemic are name giving and the choice of the baby's totem.

The name is solely the father's choice; it is often determined by attendant circumstances, atmospheric or other, or by some local happening, a hunt, a fishing expedition, the